

VZCZCXYZ0012  
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHIN #0252/01 0320850  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
R 010850Z FEB 07  
FM AIT TAIPEI  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3957  
INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 6314  
RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 7544

UNCLAS AIT TAIPEI 000252

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EAP/TC, EAP/PA, EAP/PD - LLOYD NEIGHBORS  
DEPARTMENT PASS AIT/WASHINGTON

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [TW](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: TAIWAN POLITICS, WAR IN IRAQ,

¶1. Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies focused their coverage February 1 on former President Lee Teng-hui, who made an about-face move by saying Wednesday that he has never advocated Taiwan independence; and on the rezoning of electoral districts for the year-end Legislative Yuan elections. The pro-status quo "China Times" ran a banner headline on page two that read "Lee: Pursuit of Taiwan Independence Is Both Regressive and Dangerous." The front-page headline of the pro-unification "United Daily News" also said "A Big Change of Direction; Lee Teng-hui Criticizes Taiwan Independence."

¶2. In terms of editorials and commentaries, editorials in the pro-independence "Liberty Times," Taiwan's largest-circulation daily, and the pro-unification "United Daily News" both discussed the recent revisions to the history textbooks for Taiwan's high school students - namely, changing and taking out the portion on Chinese history. The "Liberty Times" editorial said the move was an educational reform to recover historical truth and to intensify the Taiwan-centered values and the Taiwan peoples' nativist identification, while the "United Daily News" called it a forcible means of using political power to interfere with education. An editorial in the limited-circulation, conservative, pro-unification, English-language "China Post," on the other hand, discussed the war in Iraq and said it is a war the Americans must win. End summary.

### ¶3. Taiwan Politics

A) "New Edition of History Textbooks Are Meant to Reveal the Original Look of Taiwan History"

The pro-independence "Liberty Times" [circulation: 550,000] editorialized (2/1):

"... Frankly speaking, the new edition of history textbooks for high school students emphasizes nativist values and historical documents; it discards the phony grand Chinese consciousness and reduces the portion on Chinese history. The move was indeed a kind of cultural revolution, but not the one launched by Mao Zedong in 1960s and 70s.

China's Cultural Revolution was a power struggle ... and a means used by Mao to purge the dissidents in the party via mass movements.

But as for Taiwan's revisions to its history textbooks, this is an educational reform to recover historical truth, to interpret Taiwan's history from the perspective of the Taiwan people, to intensify Taiwan-centered awareness and the Taiwan people's nativist identification, and to eliminate the poisonous ideas of alien regimes. ..."

B) "Whether Sun Yat-sen Should Be Named as [Our] National Father Depends on Whether or Not Chen Shui-bian is the President of the Republic of China!"

The pro-unification "United Daily News" [circulation: 400,000]

editorialized (2/1):

"... Those in charge of the revision of the history textbooks this time used two nominal reasons to explain their move: 'cultural diversity' and 'Taiwan-centered awareness.' But in fact their real purpose was 'de-ROC-ification' -- using the force of political power to 'interfere with education.' Such a move has violated not only substantive justice but also procedural justice. ..."

#### 4. War in Iraq

"U.S. Must Win Iraq War"

The conservative, pro-unification, English-language "China Post"  
[circulation: 30,000] editorialized (2/1):

"... The war in Iraq, however, has been far harder and longer than the Americans could have imagined. They go off on the wrong foot by letting the rabble loot the country. While optimism was in the air when the constitution was approved and after the elections, it has not translated into success on the ground. ... Tell Americans it could take decades to win this war, and they are incredulous. Americans like a war to be like a basketball game - fast and furious, with a clear winner in a short time. The United States is unchallenged in high intensity warfare, but dropping a lot of bombs on Iraq won't change much - what is needed are boots on the ground.

"This type of war is a hard grind - stressful for the troops and the politicians at home. In the U.S., the anti-war movement is growing. ... It must be said that the U.S. pulling out of Iraq would be a disaster for the Americans, the Middle East and the world. The shameful exit of the Americans from Vietnam was shameful not because they lost, but because of the way the Congress cut off funds to its South Vietnamese allies. The U.S. now has an all-volunteer army. Recruiting figures have held, but the strain on the armed forces has

been considerable - the steady grind of anti-insurgent warfare is taking its toll on the troops. This is a war the Americans must win. The Bush administration will not pull out - in the short term, it may even boost troop numbers in Iraq - but in 2008 a new administration will be elected. Who can tell then?"

WANG